



# GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE

Edition 2024



Global Products Group





## LET'S TAKE CARE

*"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."*

*~ Martin Luther King Jr.*

# FOREWORD

Given our extensive global operations, comprising 28 suppliers worldwide, the supply of over 100,000 products annually, and our presence in 24 countries across four continents, we recognise our responsibility to ensure that our activities are conducted in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. We take that responsibility seriously. Within the walls of our factories and beyond. Together with our employees, suppliers, distributors and other partners. And with attention to people, animals, the environment and society.

Why we do this should be obvious. How we do this, you can read in this CSR annual report. From sustainability and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction to supporting social initiatives and creating safe working environments. We hope it will inspire you. And more importantly: we hope that you yourself will take steps to make the world a little better, healthier, more beautiful, and more sustainable.

### **Peter Biemans**

Owner of Global Products Group

## Our inspiration

The fractal, a geometric figure that is uniform. Discovered in 1975 by mathematician Benoît Mandelbrot. Constructed from parts more or less similar to the figure itself. Featuring an infinite amount of detail. At first sight chaotic, but extremely structured in actual fact. Think of the leaf of a tree, the way a school of fish swims, the fluff of a dandelion or a seemingly 'simple' shell. Behind every fractal is an equation. Behind every story, a motivation. One that we want to promote worldwide.



# OUR STORY

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Who we are	Page 07
Our values	Page 09
What we do	Page 11
Our history	Page 12
Our people	Page 19
Our CSR policy	Page 21
Results 2023	Page 27
Objectives 2024	Page 39
Social initiatives	Page 50
What's next?	Page 67





# SUSTAINABLE REMEMBRANCE

## WHO WE ARE

Of course, this issue is not about us, but about the world around us, and we want to take responsibility in this. With the products we supply, the projects we realise and the initiatives we support. But especially with our people, working at the three companies that collectively operate under the banner 'Global Products Group'.

### Funeral Products

Keeping the memory alive

Offering bereaved families a unique and lasting memory is what we strive for every day at Funeral Products. A remembrance that feels right, that fits the spirit of the times and knows how to characterise a loved one like no other. Innovation is at the heart of this. In order to best respond to the changing needs of the market. We listen, think and work closely with the industry. Constantly looking for new techniques, materials and opportunities to keep that special memory alive.



[uk.funeralproducts.eu](http://uk.funeralproducts.eu)

### Funeral Projects

A new way to remember

Funeral Projects offers innovative, modern and personalised solutions for setting up memorial sites. An innovative redesign of the traditional columbarium, for example, which has now also found its way into sports stadiums worldwide. But also unique, fully personalised memorial columns or works of art as garden ornaments. Because the memorial projects and products offered feature a modular basis, the possibilities are endless. As a result, a custom design of your own is achieved, no matter how big or small the location.



[www.funeralprojects.com](http://www.funeralprojects.com)

### Atlantis Memorials

Pioneers in memorial jewellery

Around the year 2000, the Dutch company Atlantis Memorials was one of the first to enter the memorial jewellery market. And set the tone with subtly designed ash jewellery, in which a symbolic amount of ashes could be carried unobtrusively. Now, some 20 years later, the company is part of the Global Products Group and perfect workmanship with an eye for design and detail is still at its core. Moreover, all memorial jewellery is still made by hand; pure craftsmanship and using first-class materials.



[www.atlantismemorials.eu](http://www.atlantismemorials.eu)



# ONE UNIVERSAL STARTING POINT

*"One must travel to learn."*  
~ Mark Twain

# OUR VALUES

## Innovating together

Continuous improvement is at the core of our organisation. Therefore, we are constantly looking at what can be done better, faster and more sustainably. Which (business) processes can we implement more efficiently? With the same (or even fewer) resources, how can we get more done? And how do we ensure that working with the Global Products Group is a pleasure? Working smarter increases productivity and our performance, serves our clients even better, and creates more job satisfaction and commitment among our staff.

We also use this mindset within our own network. Thus, together with our suppliers and customers, we are constantly looking for new products, techniques, materials, solutions and opportunities. Standing still is simply going backwards. By continuing to invest in ideas and processes, we can develop continuously, with gains in all areas.

## Honesty as a basis

Corporate sustainability is expressed in various ways within the Global Products Group. Within the walls of the factories, but especially out there too. From the choice of raw materials and the use of new energy, through safe and fair production processes to the supply of bio-based products.

Moreover, by working only on the basis of long-term relationships, we build a relationship of trust within our network. And we also expect the same commitment and quality from our suppliers and subcontractors. For example, our Code of Conduct is not a nice-to-have, but a must, and acting in accordance with the Modern Slavery Statement is something we take for granted. We personally ensure that our products are not only of high-quality product-wise but also produced under safe and fair conditions. And all this, of course, chain-wide.



## A better world

As Global Products Group, we take our responsibility. And that goes beyond just our core business. After all, we have the people, resources and capabilities to make great things possible. From supporting small local initiatives to lending a warm heart to national and even global social initiatives.

Financially, of course, but also with the deployment of support services and media coverage, for example. Moreover, because we have built up a broad network over all the years of our existence, we also see it as our task to successfully connect people, projects and initiatives. For example, our accountant works on a non-profit basis for several foundations that we have associated with our company. And a number of our freelancers are working selflessly to promote those same charities.





INCREASING  
IMPACT,  
REDUCING  
FOOTPRINT

# WHAT WE DO

Attention to the world around us is at the forefront of everything we do. This starts with a conscious purchasing policy, the use of mostly natural processes and pure raw materials, and our choice of suppliers. Committed partners who invest in the highest achievable quality. Suppliers paying attention to their employees, protecting local production environments and working according to environmental guidelines, attention to their employees, protecting local production environments and working according to environmental guidelines.

Our commitment is also reflected within the organisation's business processes. From considering reusing packaging materials and combining orders to minimise transport miles, to simply printing out fewer emails and separating waste. With an eye for all human aspects inside and outside the organisation and aiming to be meaningful and responsible from raw material to handover to the next of kin.





OUR  
HISTORY

**The years in a nutshell**

Where you come from partly determines who you are, and that story starts with us in 2005 with the establishment of the Global Products Group.

This is based on the desire to make an impact through entrepreneurship. A sustainable foundation was created that now extends so much further than mere registration in the Trade Register.

**2005 FOUNDATION**

An entrepreneur looking for his new challenge, Peter Biemans founded the Global Products Group. Not yet knowing exactly what this move will look like, he does know what he wants with his new company: to make an impact in the world.

Whether it is creating jobs, solving problems or making a difference in society. Entrepreneurship has the power to bring about positive change.



**2006 FUNERAL PRODUCTS**

Peter is confronted twice with the death of someone close to him. When discussing the destination of the ashes, the choices were very limited: urn 1 or urn 2, both at very high prices.

It was precisely this limitation of options that ultimately gave birth to Funeral Products.



**2007 SALES IN THE NETHERLANDS**

While searching for a wider range and suitable suppliers, the first Funeral Products urns are sold to funeral directors in the Netherlands.



**2011 MANAGING DIRECTOR SPAIN**

To better serve Spanish funeral directors' needs and wishes, Funeral Products adds a Managing Director Spain to the team.

Based in Madrid, it allows for even faster and more effective communication.



**2010 FIRST CATALOGUE**

The first Funeral Products catalogue is printed. A simple reference book that funeral specialists can give to families in their search for a suitable memorial product.



**2008 PET PRODUCTS**

A pet is part of the family, so its loss often has a big impact on its owners.

It was therefore a logical step for Funeral Products to expand its collection to include pet urns in different shapes, sizes and materials.



**2008 INTERNATIONAL**

Funeral Products produces and supplies memorial items with a high level of quality at both the product level and in terms of working conditions and terms of employment.

The word spreads fast and the first international customers order from Funeral Products.



**2012 PARTNERSHIP ATLANTIS MEMORIALS**

Funeral Products launches its partnership with Atlantis Memorials. Memorial jewellery that not only beautifully complements the collection, but also expresses a special collaboration between two like-minded organisations that value fair trade.



**2012 THAI CHILD DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION**

Atlantis Memorials' factory in Thailand operates under good and fair working conditions, production is naturally free of child labour and contributes directly to local living conditions.

This also marked an important step towards supporting the Thai Child Development Foundation, one of the Global Products Group's five pillars.



**2017 MANAGING DIRECTOR UNITED KINGDOM**

To secure its position in the UK following *Brexit*, Funeral Products switches to a Managing Director. This native speaker lives in the capital London, allowing him to move faster and keep lines of communication short.



**2017 FUNERAL PROJECTS**

There are increasing requests from the market for tailor-made advice; not only limited to the collection, but also for the purpose of designing memorial sites.

Funeral Projects was born: appropriate innovative and personalised solutions and products.



**2020**

### CODE OF CONDUCT

Saying you are doing a good job is one thing, making it transparent and visible is quite another. Still searching for how the Global Products Group can make CSR demonstrable, the company takes a first step through its Code of Conduct. A code of conduct that provides guidelines to operate under high legal and ethical standards. And applicable to all employees, agents, distributors, producers and consultants with whom Global Products Group works.



**2020**

### SUPPLIER ANALYSE

During the roll-out of the Code of Conduct process, Global Products Group had to say goodbye to a number of suppliers who did not want to move or comply with the new code of conduct. Not an easy decision, but one that was needed to drive continuous improvement.



**2020**

### THE FIRST STEP

In the search for tools to provide insight into sustainable business practices, the Global Products Group came across the CSR Performance Ladder.

A certification standard that objectively demonstrates Corporate Social Responsibility performance. The groundwork is laid to work towards a certification audit two years later.



**2023**

### SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Outlining frameworks, documenting processes and set objectives. All to uniformly implement the sustainability standard according to the CSR Performance Ladder within the Global Products Group companies. Translated into a Digital Management System, tested through a two-and-a-half-day audit. Conclusion: level 3 certification and nice development points to further expand this standard in the coming years.



**2019**

### GREENLEAVE APPROVED LABEL

Dutch foundation GreenLeave focuses on making sustainable, green funerals more accessible and tests funeral items against strict sustainability criteria.

This year, Funeral Products successfully had its first organic products rated by GreenLeave. With success, as several products now carry the GreenLeave Approved label.



**2019**

### FP-ORIGINALS

Funeral Products introduces Celest urns, the first product line from the FP-Originals collection. A patented, special collection featuring only products sketched, designed and produced by Funeral Products itself in collaboration with its own designers.



**2024**

### A SIXTH PILLAR

With the addition of Dogateers United as the sixth pillar, the Global Products Group expands its network of social initiatives.

The foundation helps to give 'second-chance dogs' from Spain a loving home in the Netherlands.



**2024**

### PLATINUM AWARD

The Greener Globe Funeral Standard is an environmental certification specifically designed for the funeral industry.

By achieving the highest possible certification, the Platinum Award, we underscore our commitment to sustainable business practices. An appreciation for our collective passion.



**2018**

### THE FIVE PILLARS

Global Products Group believes in the positive ripple effect:

**Doing good is contagious.**

This thinking formed the foundation of the five pillars: five social initiatives that the organisation supports in different ways. (read more on [page 50](#))



**2019**

### ACQUISITION OF ATLANTIS MEMORIALS

Global Products Group further expands its product range and operations with the acquisition of Atlantis Memorials commemorative jewellery, a partner with whom Global Products Group has been working for some time. A logical strategic next step, as GPG had been responsible for a substantial part of Atlantis' sales for some time.



**2024**

### SMETA 4-PILLAR

"Words are wind", meaning that vows are easily made but must also be kept. This year, the first audit at a supplier was conducted using a SMETA 4-pillar audit. This allows us to ensure not only responsible but also ethical business practices.



**Eventful years ...**

To look back at with pride, usually with a smile, sometimes with a few tears. But our story doesn't stop here. In fact: it is just now really starting to get its shape and content.

Keep on reading to see what else we have to say.



THE  
DRIVING  
FORCE

# OUR PEOPLE

People are the strength of the Global Products Group and its subsidiaries. The people who work for us, the partners we work with and those we work for. Each from their own strength and with their own story, but together as one. And above all in line with our shared vision to work together on what feels good and what is good.



- Boy
- Davy
- Frank
- Marcel
- Annemarie
- Giselle
- Peter
- Monique
- Ruud
- Mike
- Marieke
- Leon
- Marion
- Yasmin
- Monique
- Willem
- Peter
- Ron
- Marcel
- Caroline

# OUR CSR POLICY

Of course, it is easy to exclaim that you are being responsible as a company. That you are mindful of our planet and the people and animals that live on it, that your sustainability policy goes beyond double-sided printing and waste separation. We prefer to make what we promise concretely visible and we have translated our promises into the Code of Conduct and the first steps on the CSR Performance Ladder.

## The how, what and why of CSR

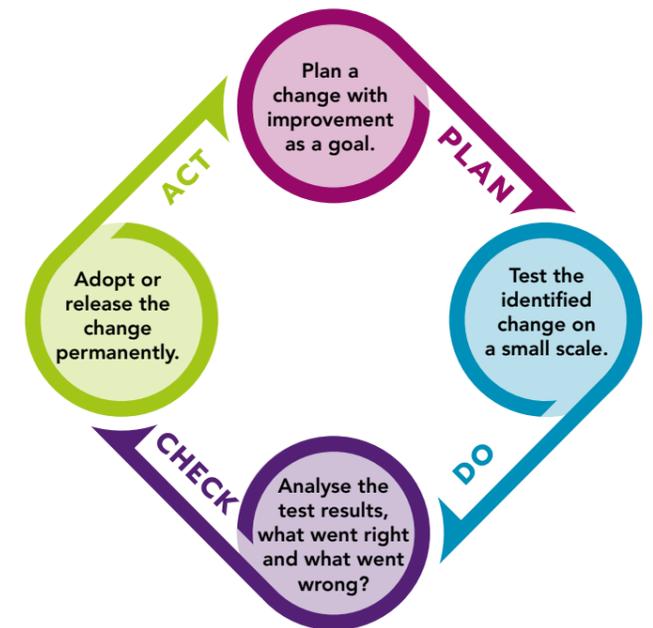
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a term has different definitions, however, they are always basically the same. We have chosen to adopt the definition of both CSR Netherlands<sup>1</sup> and the Social and Economic Council (SEC)<sup>2</sup>:

*'Consciously focusing on value creation in the elements People (humanity), Planet (environment) and Profit (society) and thereby adding long-term value to social prosperity.'*

## Targeted tools

This definition is the basis of the Global Products Group's CSR policy, or how we deal with business processes that have a social or environmental impact. The policy is implemented and ensured through the 'Deming circle'<sup>3</sup>. This quality circle gives us the tools to operate with a focus on both results and continuous improvement. This by means of the four activities: **Plan, Do, Check and Act**.

This circle is continuously rotated. There are always activities that can be further optimised: the principle of continuous improvement.



## What is the CSR Performance Ladder?

The CSR Performance Ladder<sup>4</sup> is a certification standard that objectively demonstrates the performance of corporate social responsibility. The standard enables the continuous development of 31 different CSR themes, divided into 7 main themes. By means of a management system, but also by continuously engaging in dialogue with stakeholders. The certificate makes sustainable developments and corporate social responsibility tangible.

The CSR Performance Ladder is inspired by internationally accepted documents such as ISO 26000, ISO 9001:2015, AA1000, and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). An ISO 26000, for example, lacks a management system, making it unsuitable for certification. The CSR Performance Ladder, with its requirements and certification standard, however, is suitable as a management system and serves as a certification for similar standards.

The CSR Performance Ladder certificate offers clear guidelines and transparency between the Global Products Group and its business relations. The certification provides insight and reduces potential questions about CSR.

SHOW,  
DON'T TELL

<sup>1</sup> MVO Nederland, <https://www.mvonderland.nl/en>

<sup>2</sup> Sociaal-Economische Raad, <https://www.ser.nl/en>

<sup>3</sup> The W. Edwards Deming Institute, <https://deming.org/explore/pdsa/>

<sup>4</sup> CSR Performance Ladder, <https://www.mvoprestatieladder.nl/en>



# CSR MOTIVES

## 17 goals to improve the world

The 31 themes of the CSR Performance Ladder are linked to the 17 well-known Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)<sup>5</sup>. Created on the basis of global input from both organisations and citizens, these goals provide a global compass for challenges such as poverty, education and the climate crisis. They were drawn up by all 196 countries that are members of the United Nations.



## Concrete targets

To make each goal even more concrete and insightful, behind the SDGs are 169 so-called targets. This makes it immediately clear to the Global Products Group what contribution the company is making to the various SDGs. Thanks to the CSR Performance Ladder, we have tools to concretise and systematically manage our sustainable developments, corporate social responsibility and related objectives.

## Step by step

In order to achieve certification, the Global Products Group had to evaluate both its CSR performance and the effectiveness of its CSR management system. To ensure objectivity, this assessment was conducted through an external audit. DNV was engaged. This independent risk management service provider is a renowned certification body in risk management and quality assurance. DNV was chosen because of their international experience and recognition, which contributes to the value of the results achieved.

**We are proud to announce that Global Products Group obtained its CSR Performance Ladder certification in 2023, in compliance with the requirements of performance level 3.**

Direct certification at level 3 is exceptional, as for an initial certification, levels 1 or 2 are usually seen and used as a stepping stone. However, both we and our partners already had many of our affairs well in order. This certificate (no. **C588645**) is valid for three years. During this time, we aspire to progress to certification at performance level 4.

## Scope of level 3:

- Policy and objectives determined for material CSR themes.
- Objectives are at least at the level of the industry average.
- CSR core values and business principles defined and implemented.
- CSR policy concerns customers, employees, local residents, industry organisations and suppliers.



*"A seven surrounds itself with sixes to make sure it compares favorably. But a nine always looks for a ten because they aren't afraid. They know they're good and want to get better."*

~ Johan Crujff

<sup>5</sup> United Nations, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>



### Welsh Slate

The Platinum award presented consists of a plaque made of 'Welsh Slate'. A slate from Wales, which is known for its excellent durability. The material is naturally hard and strong, making it resistant to wear. Welsh Slate is also a natural mineral that is mined and processed sustainably. The stone type has a long lifespan and a minimal impact -characteristics that are a fitting symbolism for the CSR policy of the Global Products Group.



# SUSTAINABLE FUNERAL INDUSTRY

## Exemplar of commitment

The Greener Globe Funeral Standard (GGFS<sup>®</sup>) is an environmental certification specifically designed for the funeral industry. A traditional funeral typically has a sizeable ecological footprint. The GGFS has designed a sustainability audit system specifically to make the funeral industry more environmentally conscious and thus operate more sustainably in terms of processes, methods, and materials. In doing so, the Greener Globe Funeral Standard makes 'green' development transparent and demonstrable.



GGFS has four certification levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. A company receives a Bronze Award when it can demonstrate that it operates according to a sustainable policy. A higher distinction can be obtained by completing an online audit, which evaluates various business aspects. Based on this evaluation, a score is assigned:

- A Silver Award is granted with a score of up to 60%.
- A Gold Award is granted with a score between 61% and 80%.
- A Platinum Award is granted with a score higher than 80%.

## Platinum Award

We are proud to announce that the Global Products Group has achieved the Platinum Award in 2024. A result that once again confirms the commitment of the Global Products Group's management system to sustainable business practices. A feat that we could achieve more easily by applying our acquired experience and using the guidelines of the CSR Performance Ladder as a tool. And an appreciation for the collective passion, dedication and efforts of our entire team.



*"How could I look my grandchildren in the eye and say I knew what was happening to the world and did nothing."*

*~ David Attenborough*



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

## RESULTS 2023

Over the past year, the Global Products Group has made significant progress in terms of corporate social responsibility. We are proud to note that our social initiatives and activities are starting to bear fruit. As such, the further implementation of sustainable processes has led to insight and awareness, enabling us to further reduce our ecological footprint. With the following **results**, we confirm that we are on the right track to achieving our **CSR objectives** and further increasing our positive impact.

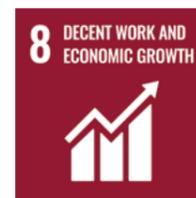


### 3. Good health and well-being

- Employee health and safety
- Consumer health and safety

In 2023, a Risk Assessment and Evaluation was conducted by an external safety adviser. This RI&E served as a control measure to ensure that our employees can work in a **healthy and safe environment**. Following the RI&E, we received an Action Plan detailing various low risks identified during the evaluation. Issues such as: an outdated employee handbook, the absence of an emergency response plan, loose cables under desks and a lack of monitoring of ARBO (Occupational Health and Safety) standards for home workspaces. While these issues do not present an immediate high risk, they do require our attention. Because, as stated: the people of the Global Products Group are the driving force behind the company. A significant portion of these issues has already been addressed in 2023.

The product range of the Global Products Group is extremely diverse: in terms of design, material and purpose. The products supplied by the Global Products Group comply with the standards laid down in, among others, the Commodities Act and foreign trade legislation. Because laws and regulations vary from country to country, we are always in close contact with (new) clients when working together. This way, we can check whether our collection meets the requirements in this specific country. Often, however, the application of our items lies with the clients themselves. Our collection includes a wide range of memorial products, supplemented with various filling and/or sealing techniques. To ensure correct use and application, we aimed in 2023 to provide **instructional videos** for our entire collection of ash-containing products (100%). These videos can be accessed on the product pages of our websites. This goal was not fully achieved, primarily due to the addition of various new products (groups) to the collection in 2023. By the end of 2023, 77.4% of the ash-containing memorial products had instructional videos. Therefore, this objective will be carried forward into 2024.



### 8. Decent work and economic growth

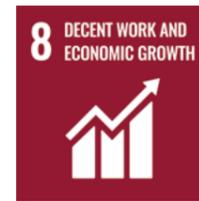
- Implementation of social amenities

As previously mentioned, we at the Global Products Group believe that people make the organisation. We take it as a compliment that the vast majority of our employees have been with Global Products Group for a long time. It is important that our employees are both physically and mentally healthy. In 2023, we started offering additional social amenities, such as providing **fresh fruit at work**, every week. We also offer our employees a **bicycle lease plans**. These are both concrete initiatives that motivate a healthier lifestyle. Additionally, the team was also treated to a Christmas package from the company as a thank-you for their once again fantastic efforts in the past calendar year.



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

# RESULTS 2023



## 8. Decent work and economic growth (continued)

- Appointment of a confidential advisor
- Reducing child labour at suppliers in high-risk countries
- Reducing forced labour at suppliers in high-risk countries
- 70% of suppliers are located in Europe

In 2023, the organisation appointed a confidential advisor. This provides employees with a **trusted environment** to report issues such as bullying, intimidation or discrimination without fear of repercussions. The behavioural guidelines for this are documented in the employee handbook so that every employee who finds themselves in a precarious situation knows the procedure. This promotes open and honest communication within the organisation and demonstrates that the Global Products Group is an organisation with a positive and safe working environment.

Just as within our own organisation, we at the Global Products Group find it important that every environment we collaborate with offers a safe and fair working environment. As an organisation, we are aware of the important role we play within the business chain. As such, we work with suppliers on local, national and international levels, each with their own challenges. To eliminate dangers such as forced labour and child labour, the Global Products Group previously established a **Code of Conduct (COC)**, a **Modern Slavery Statement (MSS)** and a **Suppliers Environmental Code (SEC)**. These are so-called behavioural documents that clearly describe how we as an organisation expect to deal with such distressing themes. This ensures that we all share a uniform, global vision under which we collectively operate.

In 2023, we sent these behavioural documents to our suppliers located in high-risk countries. To identify these countries, the CSR Risk Checker<sup>7</sup> geraadpleegd, was consulted, in which countries with 'Forced Labour & Human Trafficking' and 'Child Labour' as a hazard were included in the risk country scope. To ensure that the established rules of conduct are clear to the relevant parties, the Global Products Group had the COC and MSS documents translated into the supplier's native language. All suppliers from the high-risk countries signed and returned these documents in 2023, with the exception of one supplier. The reason for this is that during the calendar year, the Risk Checker Tool was updated, resulting in Spain being classified as a 'high-risk country'. The remaining suppliers will be included in the objective for 2024.

Behavioural documents signed by suppliers from high-risk countries	
2022	0.0%
2023	92.3%

In 2023, the Global Products Group further committed to focusing on and positively contributing to the local economy and community. This gives us as an organisation better control and transparency within the chain, supplemented by the ecological benefits of shorter transport routes. In this regard, the Global Products Group expresses its preference for **Europe-based suppliers**, as long as variables such as quality, expertise and price are in line with market standards. Since the last calendar year, the Global Products Group has worked with a total of 78.6% European suppliers.

Percentage of European suppliers	
2022	68.0%
2023	78.6%

<sup>7</sup> CSR Risk Check, <https://www.mvorisicochecker.nl/en/worldmap>



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

# RESULTS 2023



## 12. Responsible consumption and production

- Waste reduction
- Reduction of surplus memorial products
- Alternative remnants for outbound deliveries

In 2023, the Global Products Group implemented its so-called 'recycling centre'. Since last year, all (office) spaces have been equipped with waste separation bins. This allows employees and guests to easily separate their waste into different streams: paper, plastic, cups (coffee cups) and residual waste. Additionally, within the recycling centre, the plastic, mainly originating from logistics operations, is further separated into different grades. The start year of the recycling centre provides the Global Products Group with a good baseline of how much waste is being discarded. This offers insights into further reducing waste and intensifying our environmental efforts. With success, as the intensive separation of waste has allowed us to downsize from a 1,100-litre residual waste container to a 660-litre container starting in May 2023: a reduction of 26.9%. All commercial waste is collected and processed by waste processor Van Happen.

Amount of residual waste in litres	
2022	57,200
2023	41,800

There can be instances where products have no commercial value when rejected due to defects, damage or deviations from the base model. In 2023, the Global Products Group has mapped out the number of rejected products. This not only provides insights into (frequent) complaints but also gives clarity and a framework for the size and weight of the rejected products. This total is converted into product weight, which, depending on the (sub)supplier, can have three purposes: **Recycling**, **Return to Supplier** or **Destruction**. The first two waste streams are converted into new value, while the latter is burdensome. In 2023, the following baseline was established:

Weight in kilograms of rejected products in 2023		
Total	2,373.9	100.0%
Recycled	2,211.1	93.1%
Return to Supplier	31.8	1.4%
Destroyed	131.0	5.5%

At Global Products Group, we understand how crucial it is to adequately, quickly, and correctly ship products for the funeral industry. To carefully ship emotionally valuable products, sturdy and reliable packaging materials are essential. Packaging that fulfils this requirement is, by definition, not always **environmentally friendly**. In 2023, we began researching sustainable substitutes to replace the so-called plastic filler material. To this end, we also engaged in conversations with our larger suppliers: How do they handle this, and what advice can they offer us? We will continue this search in 2024. The possibilities turned out to be much more extensive than initially thought, as the substitute must be universally applicable to the wide and diverse collection of the Global Products Group.

# RESULTS 2023



## 12. Responsible consumption and production (continued)

- Statements of intent by significant stakeholders and documentation thereof
- Ensuring compliance with the Advertising Code in promotional activities
- Preparing a Lifecycle Analysis plan of action

“Globally Responsible”; the slogan of the Global Products Group. As an organisation, we are very conscious of our role within the business chain, a responsibility we are more than willing to take on. A philosophy that, moreover, seamlessly aligns with the mindset of founder Peter Biemans: entrepreneurship as a force to bring about positive change. We are enormously proud of the milestones we have achieved in recent years, but above all, we hope these achievements will be a source of inspiration for others. During a reflective session with our significant stakeholders, the main interested parties of the Global Products Group, we posed the following question to them: **How does your company incorporate sustainability?** With these parties, the core of the GPG network, we shared our statements of intent, which are detailed in the mentioned behavioural documents: COC, MSS and SEC. Thus, we operate together from one shared vision and foundation. Last year, all significant stakeholders read and signed the behavioural documents for agreement. As such, we can give meaning to a sustainable policy together.

Stakeholders who have signed the behavioural documents	
2022	0.0%
2023	100.0%

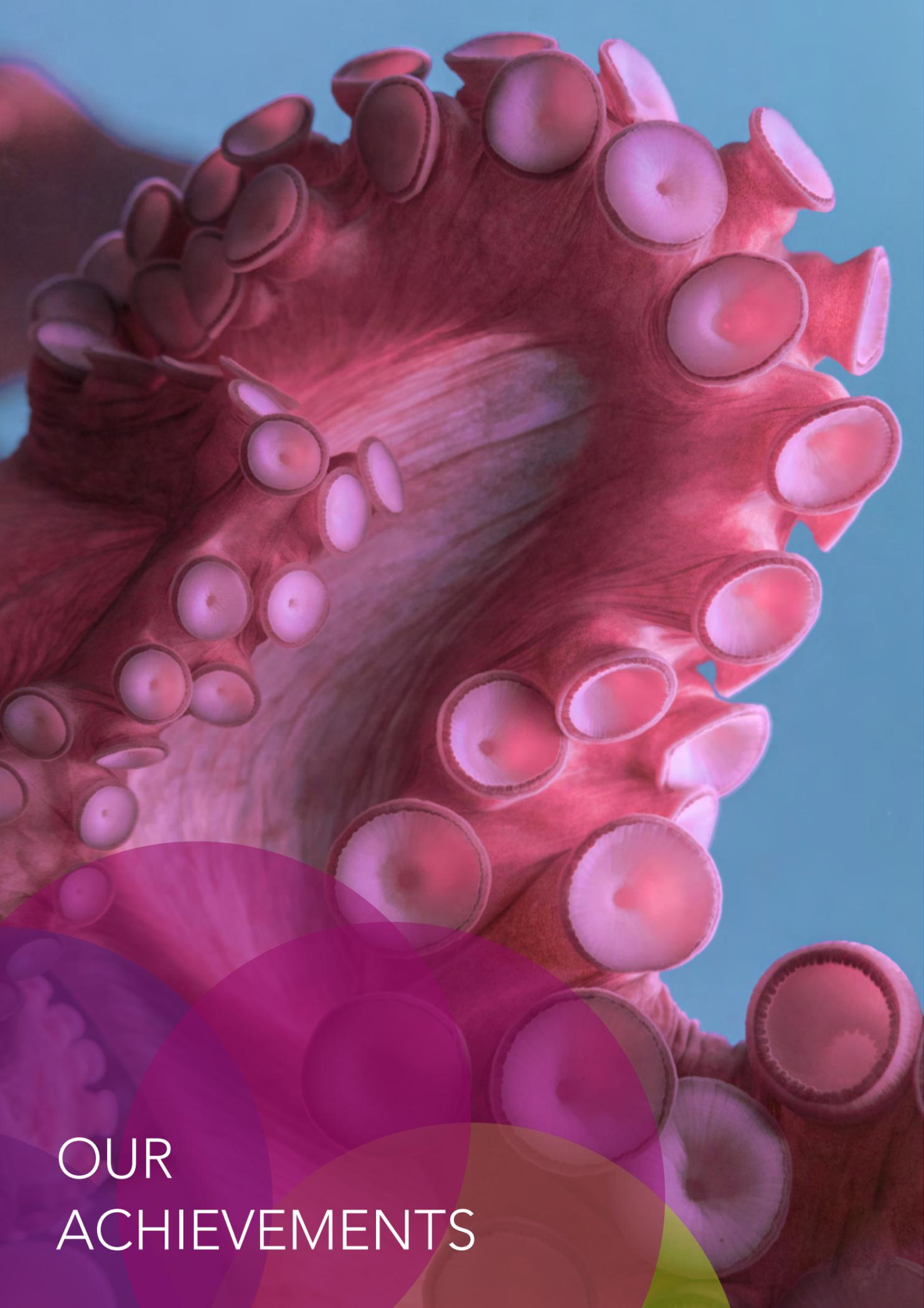
Additionally, the Global Products Group has drawn up an action plan to achieve uniform documentation of compliance with these statements of intent among our suppliers. After all, actions speak louder than words. The action plan was completed in 2023. This has taken shape through an audit programme in accordance with the framework of a **SMETA 4-pillar audit**. In this, an objective, external party assesses the enforcement of the agreed guidelines with suppliers. In 2023, the first supplier has already completed the entire SMETA 4-pillar audit process.

At the Global Products Group, we take compliance with laws and regulations very seriously. This includes the rules of the Dutch Advertising Code Foundation<sup>8</sup>. In 2023, we ensured that advertisements from Global Products Group companies were **respectful, non-offensive** and **truthful**. This way, we safeguard our reliability. Every advertisement includes contact information, providing the opportunity to file a complaint; a control method for compliance with the established rules.

As an organisation, we recognise our responsibility to protect the environment within the business chain. Not surprisingly, many of our objectives are focused on environmental impacts, and one of the behavioural documents (SEC) is specifically aimed at the environmental policy of the Global Products Group. In 2023, an action plan was developed for mapping out the **Lifecycle Analysis (LCA)** on a product group level. Using an established methodology, we are able to map out for various suppliers how sustainable and responsible a product group actually is. This LCA analyses five phases: extraction of raw materials, production, transport, use and maintenance and waste processing.

OUR  
ACHIEVEMENTS

<sup>8</sup> Advertising Code Foundation, <https://www.reclamecode.nl/english/>



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

## RESULTS 2023



### 12. Responsible consumption and production (continued)

- Applying Life Cycle Analysis to three suppliers
- Energy savings of 2% among employees

Subsequently, the Global Products Group set the target of applying the LCA to three different suppliers in 2023. Ultimately, the organisation was unable to complete a full LCA with any supplier in 2023. However, an analysis has been performed and developed for one supplier, although it is not yet complete. Here, the theory, measurability, and implementation of an **environmentally-oriented LCA method** proved to be quite complex. A learning process where several imperfections were encountered during an initial practical analysis. As a result, no complete LCA was carried out in 2023.

In 2022, the Global Products Group mapped its energy consumption in terms of **gas, water** and **electricity** within its business premises. At that time, we concluded that all measured values were at or even below the average consumption compared to similar organisations. This was a positive observation, but as a company, we saw ample room and opportunities for improvement. By investing in energy-saving solutions and increasing awareness among employees, the Global Products Group achieved a reduction of 15.8% in cubic metres of gas, 2.8% in kWh of electricity, and 6.9% in litres of water in 2023 compared to 2022. A promising start that we can explore and refine in the coming years.

Energy consumption business premises			
Energy type	2022	2023	% difference
Gas (m <sup>3</sup> )	6,600	5,560	- 15.8%
Electricity (kWh)	21,800	21,200	- 2.8%
Water (l)	72,000	67,000	- 6.8%



### 13. Climate action

- CO<sub>2</sub> reduction in inbound deliveries

As a key player in the business chain, we recognise the impact of our role on the climate. In previous years, the Global Products Group has implemented various measures and strategies to mitigate this impact. We have not stopped there, as in 2023, the Global Products Group mapped its fixed transport routes for inbound deliveries. Based on this input, a **Dashboard** was created that provides insight into diverse and important information about inbound deliveries throughout the calendar year. Metrics include: kilometres travelled, type of transport, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per month and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per supplier. This dashboard allows us to make comparisons based on specific information, but also serves as a starting point to further reduce our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the coming years.



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

# RESULTS 2023



## 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions

- Respecting the rights of the local population
- Countering corruption
- Communication of CSR policy

The Global Products Group attaches great importance to a fair and safe working environment, not only within our own business premises but also with our suppliers. Through the Suppliers Environmental Code, we collectively protect the local population at the production locations of our suppliers. In 2023, we initially focused on suppliers that classified ‘**Environment & Surroundings**’ as a country risk using the CSR Risk Checker tool<sup>9</sup>. In 2023, 81.3% of suppliers from these high-risk countries have read, signed, and returned the SEC document. The main reason for not achieving 100% is because collaboration with several of these suppliers has terminated or will terminate in 2024. Therefore, in the current year, this percentage will be higher.

SEC document signed by suppliers from high-risk countries	
2022	0.0%
2023	81.3%

Development is an element found in every line of the Global Products Group’s collection. From design and material to packaging. Without aspects such as peace, justice and safety, development on both a product and national level is impossible. An important component of this balance is the term ‘corruption’. Within the **Code of Conduct** of the Global Products Group, a specific paragraph is dedicated to countering corruption and bribery. To provide insight into which countries corruption is a significant issue, the ‘Corruption Perceptions Index’ was used. This tool measures a CPI score; a representation of the perception of corruption in the public sector of countries worldwide. Countries with a CPI score<sup>10</sup> below 60 were identified as high-risk countries for 2023. In 2023, 91.7% of these countries have read, signed and returned the COC document. As with the previous objective, 100% was not achieved due to the fact that collaboration with the missing supplier is being terminated in the current year.

COC document signed by suppliers from high-risk countries	
2022	0.0%
2023	91.7%

In 2023, the Global Products Group literally turned a new page. A written CSR policy, translated into a first edition of the CSR Annual Report, delivery of a Digital Management System and of course the certification of the **CSR Performance Ladder**, in accordance with the requirements of level 3. The CSR Annual Report was communicated to the Global Products Group constituency in various ways: through a printed edition to our significant stakeholders, a digital version to members of our online database, and via our websites, where a digital version of the report was made available. Printed versions of the annual report were also available for visitors to the international funeral trade shows in which Global Products Group companies participated.

<sup>9</sup> CSR Risk Check, <https://www.mvorisicochecker.nl/en/worldmap>  
<sup>10</sup> Transparency International, <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023>



FOCUS  
ON TOMORROW

# OBJECTIVES 2024

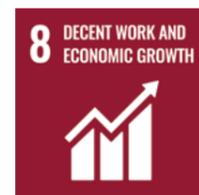
Every year, we set new targets. Ambitions that align with the vision of the Global Products Group, combined with the expectations from our network. These goals focus on **creating added value** in terms of people, society and the environment. This is achieved by further implementing sustainable methods, promoting good working conditions and reducing the ecological footprint. Transparency is the key to trust. Therefore, the Global Products Group finds it important to be open and honest. That is why we report annually on the progress made on our CSR objectives. This way, we keep moving forward.



## 3. Good health and well-being

- Consumer health and safety
- Establishing procedure for instructions for use of new products

In the past year, the Global Products Group has intensified the availability of instructional videos for the filling and application of its ash-containing products. The aim was to achieve this for all product groups (100%) by 2023. Unfortunately, complete implementation was not achieved. The major obstacle was the addition of new products to the collection, for which no direct instructional video was available. A procedure for creating instructional videos for new products was lacking. To prevent this in the coming year, we will develop a **procedure** to consistently provide **new products** with a solid instructional video. This is to inform end-users on how to correctly fill a product and understand the possibilities for each specific item. The goal is to have instructional videos for the entire collection by the end of 2024. Products for which this is not feasible will - whether temporarily or not - be provided with a printed instruction manual.



## 8. Decent work and economic growth

- Curbing child labour at suppliers
- Curbing forced labour at suppliers

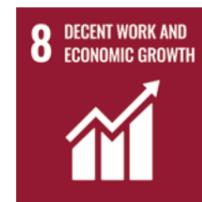
A better world; one of the three core values of the Global Products Group. As a company, we work with various suppliers, ranging from those practically around the corner to those on the other side of the world. Within our collaborations, we see no room for slavery, in any form. This is a mindset we expect our suppliers to share. For clarity, in 2023, we sent our **behavioural documents** (COC, MSS, SEC) into suppliers with a production location in a so-called high-risk country. These are countries that, according to the CSR Risk Checker tool<sup>11</sup>, have classified the themes 'Forced Labour & Human Trafficking' and 'Child Labour' as country risks. Additionally, we plan to send the behavioural documents to other suppliers who have not yet been addressed. Although the risk of these themes is much lower with this group, the Global Products Group wants to fully ensure the safeguarding of these societal themes.

<sup>11</sup> CSR Risk Check, <https://www.mvorisicochecker.nl/en/worldmap>



FOCUS  
ON TOMORROW

# OBJECTIVES 2024



## 8. Decent work and economic growth (continued)

- Documentation of statements of intent
- 80% of suppliers are located in Europe
- No barriers for forming a union

The truth reveals itself in the actions we show. Last year, suppliers with production locations in so-called risk countries received, read and signed the Global Products Group behavioural documents for formal agreement. This first step was taken to officially inform and make our suppliers aware of the Global Products Group standards and guidelines. We expect our suppliers not only to follow this code of conduct but also to comply with it. To monitor and ensure this, our supplier network is assessed against the criteria in the behavioural documents through an **audit programme** according to the **SMETA 4-pillar standard**. This form of documentation also reinforces the value of the suppliers involved. A positive evaluation and report eliminate any doubts about operational performance, regardless of the potential reputation of the production country in question.

The SMETA 4-pillar audit method is ethical and covers all aspects of responsible business conduct. The programme extensively covers four different audit pillars: **Labour Standards, Health & Safety, Environmental Assessment** and **Business Ethics**. It examines whether an organisation meets international standards for ethical and responsible entrepreneurship. As is known, the Global Products Group works with a comprehensive national and international network. This makes it a goal that will take several years to achieve. Therefore, we initially focus on suppliers with production locations in risk countries. These countries have been identified based on the 'Corruption Perceptions Index' tool, where countries with a CPI score<sup>12</sup> below 60 are considered high-risk. In 2024, we aim to have two suppliers fully audited according to the SMETA 4-pillar. If there are deviations from the set standards, the supplier is given ample time to take appropriate measures. The extent of this depends on the impact of the identified deviation.

Earlier, the Global Products Group has stated that it attaches great importance to supporting the local economy. Therefore, we always explore the possibility of having new products, whether self-designed or not, produced by suppliers with **European production locations**. This allows us to reduce transport distances, delivery times and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. In 2023, our goal was to work with at least 70% of European suppliers. In 2024, we want to take another step further, striving for a supplier network consisting of at least 80% European providers.

The Global Products Group operates as a transparent organisation. The employees in our company are unequivocally the driving force. Here, a safe and fair working environment is a must. As can be read in the results for 2023, these aspects are core points within the Global Products Group's policy. Several activities and solutions have been realised in previous years to maintain a **healthy employment relationship**. Additionally, we want to emphasise that our employees, naturally, have full freedom to form a union or enter into a collective labour agreement. We rely on our own strength and openness, where every subject within the organisation can be discussed. It is important that our people know they have this freedom. We will flesh out this aspect in the coming year through a written action plan.

<sup>12</sup> Transparency International, <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023>



# OBJECTIVES 2024



## 10. Reduced inequalities

- Establish a procedure for the possibility of anonymous job applications

The companies of the Global Products Group operate transparently at every level of the organisation. With openness, honesty and trust as motives, we see no room for discrimination in any form. Logically, this also applies to the recruitment process for new staff. To guarantee this, we will write a procedure in 2024 to enable anonymous applications within the recruitment process. This way, we can focus on a person's **qualifications** and **skills**. Through this anonymous procedure, we can eliminate the appearance of unconscious biases related to age, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity, thus promoting equal opportunities for everyone.



## 12. Responsible consumption and production

- 75% of the organic collection is GreenLeave-certified
- Ensuring compliance with the Advertising Code in promotional activities
- Alternative packaging for outbound deliveries

Throughout their lives, people increasingly make conscious choices. Although traditional funerals are often quite burdensome for the environment, sustainable options usually remain overlooked. This is unfortunate, especially given the growing demand for responsible products and solutions within the funeral industry. Several sustainable possibilities exist, of which people are simply unaware. The Dutch foundation GreenLeave<sup>13</sup> responds to this development by exploring all sustainable funeral options. Funeral-related products are evaluated by the foundation, focusing on six different sustainability aspects. Products that have successfully gone through the certification process are awarded the **GreenLeave label**. Additionally, they are included in the sustainable choice offerings of the funeral directors affiliated with the foundation. This way, bereaved families have a complete overview of responsible options. The Global Products Group supports this vision and has successfully certified various items in previous years. To further embrace this mindset, we want to intensify our efforts by aiming to have 75% of the organic collection certified according to the GreenLeave standard in the coming year.

Just like last year, the Global Products Group will adhere to the regulations of the **Stichting Reclame Code**<sup>14</sup> (the Dutch Advertising Code Foundation) in the design, realisation, and distribution of promotional activities. This way, we can prevent our companies' promotional expressions from being misleading, offensive or contrary to the truth.

In the 2023 results, it was mentioned that we did not complete the ongoing research into sustainable alternatives for plastic filling materials as planned that year. Reliable packaging material is essential when shipping emotionally valuable items. Due to the extensive and versatile collection of the Global Products Group, it is crucial that a substitute is suitable for all **shapes, sizes** and **materials** of our product groups. We aim to complete this research in 2024 and replace 50% of the plastic filling material with a more sustainable solution.

FOCUS  
ON TOMORROW

<sup>13</sup> GreenLeave, <https://greenleave.nl/>

<sup>14</sup> Advertising Code Foundation, <https://www.reclamecode.nl/english/>

# OBJECTIVES 2024



## 12. Responsible consumption and production (continued)

- Applying Life Cycle Analysis to eight product groups
- Waste reduction
- Reduction of remnants of memorial products

How environmentally friendly are our products? A question that the Global Products Group asked itself last year. A topic that also attracted a lot of interest from various parties in the GPG network. In 2023, we developed an action plan to measure the environmental impact of our products. This ultimately resulted in a Life Cycle Analysis model (LCA), in which five phases are analysed: raw material extraction, production, transport, use and maintenance and waste processing. With this information, we can calculate the **environmental effects** of an average **memorial product** within each product group. It turned out to be a complex process that had to be constantly adjusted to arrive at a complete and universal measurement model. In addition, the LCA model was implemented at a number of suppliers last year, but not completely completed at that time. For 2024, we remain ambitious and aim to have a complete analysis of at least eight product groups.

In 2023, Global Products Group has implemented a recycling centre, enabling us to actively separate waste such as paper, cardboard, plastic packaging and coffee cups. Within the 'plastic' category in particular, the waste separation process will be intensified, with separate collection of materials such as polystyrene foam, plastic strapping and packaging plastic. As a result, we generated significantly less residual waste last year. For 2024, we aim for a further **reduction** of at least 10% in **residual waste**. This is in part achieved by raising awareness among staff and further optimising our waste separation process.

The products of the Global Products Group carry great emotional value, both for the craftsmen who make them and for the families and bereaved who receive them. To guide them as best as possible, we strive for the highest possible quality, both at the product and service levels. Despite our efforts, it may occur that memorial products are not suitable for delivery due to defects, transport damage or deviations from the base model. Such products are not automatically considered waste. In fact, some items can be recycled based on their raw materials or restored by our suppliers into **fully-fledged memorial products**. In 2023, Global Products Group mapped out in detail the various destinations of rejected items throughout the year, as well as the quantities. Based on this, we aim to achieve a proportional reduction of 15% in the amount of destroyed remnants this year. We want to achieve this by expanding our recycling options and communicating more quickly to resolve product issues with our suppliers, thus minimising errors in subsequent deliveries.

FOCUS  
ON TOMORROW

# OBJECTIVES 2024



## 13. Climate action

- CO<sub>2</sub> reduction in inbound deliveries
- CO<sub>2</sub> compensation for inbound deliveries
- CO<sub>2</sub> reduction in outbound deliveries
- CO<sub>2</sub> compensation for outbound deliveries

As a key player in the business chain, the Global Products Group recognises the impact of its activities on the climate. In previous years, we have already implemented several conscious measures and strategies, but we strive for continuous improvement. Last year, we developed a detailed **CO<sub>2</sub> dashboard** to gain insight into the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of inbound deliveries. After all, measuring is knowing, and this dashboard serves as the starting point for a thorough situational analysis and an action plan to implement concrete CO<sub>2</sub>-reducing measures. Our goal is to proportionally reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from inbound deliveries by at least 25% in 2024 compared to 2023.

In addition to a reduction, we aim to **offset** our remaining **CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** for 2024. In this way, Global Products Group takes full responsibility in the fight against climate change. With CO<sub>2</sub> compensation for our inbound deliveries, we reduce our ecological footprint and contribute to limiting global warming. We will draw up a detailed action plan to clearly and efficiently achieve this ambition.

In addition to inbound parcels, the Global Products Group naturally also sends shipments. Similar to the 2023 target of reducing **CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** from inbound shipments, we will develop a CO<sub>2</sub> dashboard for all our **outbound deliveries** in 2024. This project is more complex due to the various location possibilities of our shipped packages. However, it is essential to make our total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions fully visible and measurable, both upstream (inbound deliveries) and downstream (outbound deliveries).

As with **CO<sub>2</sub> compensation** for inbound deliveries, we strive to offset CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for our outbound deliveries. This aspect will be integrated into the action plan for CO<sub>2</sub> compensation of inbound deliveries in 2024, allowing us to involve both sides of our business process in our objectives and decision-making in the future.



## 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions

- Respecting the rights of the local population

Working in a fair and safe work environment is crucial at Global Products Group. We expect not only our own organisations but also our suppliers to provide reliable working conditions. These guidelines are established in the Global Products Group's Supplier Environmental Code of Conduct document. Earlier, we sent this Code of Conduct to our suppliers in high-risk countries so that they could read, understand and sign it for agreement. In addition, in 2024, we will send the remaining suppliers the SEC Code of Conduct. In this way, every member of our **supplier network** is aware of our vision and rules and can respond appropriately where necessary. Additionally, the criteria in the Code of Conduct will be verified through a SMETA 4-pillar audit, as described in the "Documentation of statements of intent" objective.

FOCUS  
ON TOMORROW



FOCUS  
ON TOMORROW

# OBJECTIVES 2024



## 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions (continued)

- Countering corruption
- Communication of CSR policy

The Global Products Group considers it its responsibility to eliminate corruption throughout the business chain. To spread this idea within our network, we shared the Code of Conduct with suppliers operating from high-risk countries in 2023. In 2024, we will further expand this approach by sending this Code of Conduct to all remaining suppliers. In this way, we aim to jointly **eliminate corruption** within the chain. As with the previous objective, the aspect of corruption will be evaluated using the SMETA 4-pillar audit programme, as described in the “Documentation of statements of intent” objective.

Time flies, a saying that certainly proves true. Last year, we began developing a clear and concrete CSR policy in line with the CSR Performance Ladder standards. And although time races by, at Global Products Group, we certainly do not stand still. We aim to be a leading player in the funeral industry. The reactions to our 2023 **CSR Annual Report** were extremely positive, both from key stakeholders and parties with less involvement. From both existing and new customers, nationally and internationally. One of the highlights was achieving the Platinum Award, the highest possible distinction within the sustainability audit system of the Greener Globe Funeral Standard<sup>15</sup>.

This positive reception confirms our belief that we made the right choice in both our products and services and in the field of corporate social responsibility. As with last year, the **achieved results** and **new objectives** will be added to our website. In this way, they are accessible to everyone, and anyone can make a desired comparison with the previous annual report.

<sup>15</sup> Greener Globe Funeral Standard, <https://www.ggfs.co.uk>



# SOCIAL INITIATIVES

*As Global Products Group, we not only take a critical look at our own role in the world, but we like to go the extra mile. Thus, we support various local, national and global social initiatives and support them in various ways. Financially, for example, but also with deployment of support services and media coverage of the wonderful things they in turn do for the world.*



# GIVE UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN A CHANCE

*"I don't believe we can change the world, but for the children we help, we make a world of difference."*

~ Rosalie Tiegies



## THAI CHILD DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

We travel to Thailand. To Paksong to be precise. A rural community amid the rainforest in the hills of Phato, near the Thai coastal town of Ranong. From there, Rosalie Tiegies, Ingrid van der Straten and countless local volunteers take care of hundreds of children outside the available care and education system, and help them with scholarships, school uniforms, lunch money, surgeries, physiotherapy, tube feeding, numerous educational programmes or whatever is needed. They often involve children with disabilities or socio-economic problems.

### Love knows no boundaries

"About 20 years ago, I was sent to Thailand as a volunteer," says Rosalie, founder of the Thai Child Development Foundation (TCDF), "and got to work on numerous wonderful projects. It was incredibly rewarding work, but I often found that things could be different. Moreover, not only had I fallen in love with the country and its people, but a certain person had also stolen my heart. Reason enough to stay, so together with support from Ingrid and some Thai volunteers, I started the foundation. Because although Thailand is developing at a rapid pace, rural opportunities are mostly limited."

### What exactly does the TCDF do?

TCDF supports children with physical limitations, developmental or learning disabilities, as well as children growing up in extreme poverty or facing social problems. "The local teachers in the village schools are our eyes and ears," says Rosalie. "They signal it when a child, for example, does not come to school, does not have food with him or has bruises. When such a report comes in, one of our home care staff will go out and work in close consultation with local village leaders and parents or carers to see how we can provide tailored help. This could be support in the form of study help, but also medical care or temporary accommodation with someone else within the family or local community."

### From poverty to university

The foundation prefers not to remove the children from their homes and instead makes every effort to let them grow up in their own environment. In all these years, there has been only one exception to that rule at the very beginning. Rosalie: "Through a monk, I was made aware of Dau aged two and her younger sister. The mother had been out of the picture

for some time and the father had been given a life sentence and was wanted. So a dire situation, especially as the children were considerably neglected. Since we did not have our strong networks in the villages back then and could not find a foster family, I then took them in and took them into my heart. We have gradually rebuilt contact with the mother over the years into co-parenting with me. Meanwhile, Dau turned 19, had the highest mark in the class during her graduation and started studying Maritime Business at university. That makes me so immensely proud!"

### How can you support TCDF?

Donations are of course always welcome and even a small amount can really make a substantial difference to a child in Thailand. The foundation is also always looking for volunteers to get involved on location or from home (online). Last but not least, the foundation rents out holiday homes by the river. Besides the beautiful nature and gardens, secluded beaches and national marine parks are a stone's throw away. There are also numerous activities and day trips organised, a restaurant, a shop, and daily yoga and other workshops. All proceeds flow back to the school for children with learning disabilities and vocational training for young people with disabilities. And so the foundation can create fair jobs again for young people with disabilities in the future. Holidays for charity as it were, but without the terrible orphanage tourism.





# EVERYONE A HEALTHY HEART

*"You don't need to chew on a carrot 24 hours a day to be healthy, but it is important to know what to look out for and what to do."*

~ Tessa Tertsch



# HEART FOUNDATION

6 minutes. So what is 6 minutes? It is the time for an enchanting fairytale ride on the 'Droomvlucht' in the park the Efteling. A train journey from Amsterdam Central to Sloterdijk station, and the duration of Bohemian Rhapsody. But it is especially time that is crucial in a cardiac arrest, stroke or heart attack. Because by starting CPR and/or deploying an AED within that paltry 6 minutes, the chances of survival are significantly increased.

In the Netherlands, there are approximately 1.7 million people with chronic heart or vascular disease. If we do nothing, nearly one million patients will be added within seven years. Founded in 1964, the Dutch Heart Foundation aims to outsmart heart and vascular diseases in the future and stop their growth.

## Heart for the Cause

One of the ways to support the Heart Foundation in its life-saving work is the Heart for the Cause partnership. "Companies kill a lot of birds with one stone by doing this," says relationship manager Tessa Tertsch. "Indeed, on the one hand, companies are asserting their social commitment. They also show that they want the best for their employees, support them in this and create internal awareness. And as a partner, you can even actually save lives."

## What exactly does Heart for the Cause do?

With a monthly investment of around € 300, as a Heart for the Cause partner you will help keep even more hearts healthy and strong, while inspiring your employees to take good care of their hearts. With a smoke-free work environment and an employee vitality package, for example, with education and events for a heart-healthy lifestyle. With the Personal Health Check and blood pressure meters or on-site blood pressure readings, encouraging employees to learn about their heart and thus the risk of cardiovascular disease. But also with a CPR course for employees and an AED at the company premises, so as citizen responders, they can provide quick assistance when every minute counts.

## Still 39% to go

"Certainly the latter is important," Tessa continues her story. "Currently, 61% of the Netherlands is a covered 6-minute zone. That means that in almost two-thirds of the country,

proper cardiac arrest assistance can be provided within those six minutes. For example, in that part of the country, there is an active call system, where after calling 112 through the national CPR call system HartslagNu, messages are automatically sent to people who can resuscitate and are in the vicinity of the victim, the so-called 'citizen responders'. And are there enough AEDs available and, most importantly, accessible. After all, an AED hanging in the hall of a company or inside the gates of a business premises is of no use outside office hours.

## Everyone a healthy heart

"That is the Heart Foundation's dream. So for more than 55 years, we have invested in research and innovations in prevention and care. But just as important, we believe it is to help Dutch people know their hearts and take good care of their hearts. In this way, we prevent people from becoming heart patients and/or unnecessarily (over)suffering from heart disease," Tessa said.

## How can you support the Heart Foundation?

Become a partner of Heart for the Cause and decide where your donation goes, and of course, any new citizen first responders are also more than welcome, as are AEDs. So do you have a heart for the cause? Find out how you can join and contribute at the [hartstichting.nl/hartvoordezaak](http://hartstichting.nl/hartvoordezaak), because everyone in the world has the right to a healthy heart.





# MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH HAPPY MOMENTS

*"I had to break my neck to realise what is really important in life and therefore advise others to start doing that a little sooner."*

~ Jaap Bressers



# CARLOS MOMENTS

What started as a refreshing swim on a sunny summer day in Albufeira, ended all alone and in a blind panic in the ICU of a hospital in a complete strange country. It happened to Jaap Bressers. Just 21 years old and a bright future ahead. A future that was ruined with one crack of his neck. A high spinal cord injury was the diagnosis and Jaap became paralysed from the chest down.

What does that have to do with the Carlos moments foundation? "'Practically everything'," Jaap adds. "Because then suddenly during the night shift and my umpteenth panic attack, there was Brother Carlos. He assessed the situation well, walked over to me, put his hand on my shoulder and said, 'It's okay'. That moment changed my life, and gave me just that push I needed to realise I was still alive."

## There is a Carlos in everyone

Ten years later, Jaap dares to call his lifesaver and thank him. For Carlos, it was just his job, but only then did he realise that that 'simple gesture' was vital for Jaap. And with that, Carlos moments became a reality. A foundation dedicated to making a big difference with small gestures, and the great thing is that anyone can do it! Simple and in your own way, because there is a brother Carlos in every person.

## What exactly do Jaap and his foundation do?

What don't they do, is better to ask. Thus, Jaap is now a much sought-after speaker and inspirer. He has set up an inspiration network for entrepreneurs, developed happiness lessons for primary schools and has two successful books to his name, part of the proceeds of which are used to plant trees. He gives away holidays at the Carlos House to those in need and puts heartwarming people in the bright sunshine with flowers and a real care award. He also encourages people to simply make a difference to another person themselves. By sharing wonderful examples through his self-developed special happiness app. Here people share and inspire each other to simple valuable actions. This is how the impact continues to grow.

## Doing good multiplies

Superheroes, an app and chilling. Just three examples of happy moments shared on his platform and multiplying. For example, on a sweltering day, Mieke treated the postman to a pink popsicle. Fleur sent an app to a classmate who had lost his grandfather to wish him strength, and window washers now wash the windows of the children's hospital in Utrecht dressed as superheroes, resulting in plenty of happy little faces. Doing good is not that difficult and a small gesture brings much joy. When you consider that negative things require three times more attention than positive ones, you know what to do!

## How can you support Carlos moments?

Although the foundation is not-for-profit, it does have big ambitions and any contribution to that end is more than welcome. All proceeds go to the foundation, and [carlosmoments.nl/ikwilhelpen](http://carlosmoments.nl/ikwilhelpen) lists the possibilities. So be sure to check out the site and find all the information you are looking for.

In addition, what you can also do is give your neighbour, mother, aunt, dentist or postman a happy moment or just simply smile. And be sure to download the free happiness app for the necessary dose of positivity in your life.



# ANIMAL EMERGENCY FOUNDATION

September 2009. Hanno Berger was working as a manager in tourism and was travelling with a large incentive group in Indonesia at the time. Eating together outside on the hotel terrace, they suddenly heard a terrible dog howl. It went through marrow and bone, and Hanno and some others rushed to the scene. What they found there is too gruesome to put on paper here. It was then that something snapped in Hanno.

“Back home in the Netherlands, it kept gnawing at me,” Hanno says. “I could not fathom that humanity is capable of inflicting so much suffering on other living creatures. I wanted to do something; dedicate the rest of my life entirely to helping stray animals. But not without consulting my wife Stephanie. She gave me her blessing. However, I did have to promise her that I was going to set up my own foundation to help stray animals structurally without any compensation. “And so it happened. Hanno quit his top job, Stephanie would start earning a living, the car went out the door and from then on, holidays, cinema visits and eating out became a thing of the past.”

## From luxury living to other wealth

To gauge the situation, Hanno first visited dozens of local shelters across Europe. From Spain and Portugal to Ukraine and Hungary. Everywhere came one unequivocal answer to his question of where the need was greatest: there was a particular need for sterilisations. Hanno: “Back on home soil, I immediately contacted the faculties of veterinary medicine at the universities in Utrecht and Ghent. Less than six months later, the first students were on their way to help local vets with spaying and neutering. That eventually became 5,000 to 6,000 interventions on an annual basis.”

## What is it that Hanno and the many volunteers actually do?

Animal Emergency Foundation rests on three pillars. The first, of course, is spaying and neutering cats and dogs to curb stray animal problems. Secondly, the foundation provides both financial and moral support to strictly selected animal helpers worldwide to provide emergency assistance. For example, for animals that are hit for reasons of cruelty or

that are affected in other ways by the cruelty of people or by an accident. The third pillar is education for children, aged 8 to 12, about respect for animals. Especially in Southern and Eastern Europe, the foundation's core team is currently busy with this.

Some of the success stories: Meet Sasha from Serbia. He has more dogs than all the shelters in the Netherlands put together; now more than 800. Above all, these need food, and preferably nutritious food, to improve their resistance. This is much needed with winter temperatures of minus 20°C. An aid campaign for the shelter was already launched in 2020 and is now repeating itself. Just because it is badly needed, and because Sasha's words have stuck with many: “For the first time in the existence of this shelter, not one dog has died of malnutrition this winter ...” That's what we do it for Sasha!

## How can you support the Animal Emergency Foundation?

Actually, it just comes down to euros or dollars and anything the foundation can use to pay for nutritious food, medical care, sterilisations, castrations, shelter and facilities. To make the help more concrete, monthly actions have been created and are listed on the website available in 10 languages. Every donor is mentioned by name (or anonymously), and weekly updates are given for each aid project. Full transparency and 100% for the animals, that's what it's all about. Beautiful right?

## HELP STRAY ANIMALS WORLDWIDE

*“Only the Netherlands and Vatican City have no stray dogs; otherwise, they can be found all over the world in large numbers.”*

~ Hanno Berger





## HELP PEOPLE IN NEED

*"Everyone can contribute to this good work in their own way and from their own strengths to a greater or lesser extent."*

~ Henry Dunant

# CRUZ ROJA

What began 160 years ago as one man's dream has grown over the past century and a half into the world's largest relief organisation. With nearly 100 million members, volunteers and supporters and branches in 192 countries, the Red Cross helps people in natural disasters, pandemics, conflicts and other emergencies. Spain's Cruz Roja also contributes.

Spain has always been on the front line on humanitarian issues. Not surprisingly, the country was the seventh to sign the first Geneva Convention, drafted in 1864 on the initiative of Red Cross founder Henry Dunant. Six years later, the Cruz Roja came into action for the first time, providing humanitarian aid in the Franco-Prussian war. In 1872, it acted independently for the first time in the Third Carlist War.

### What does the Cruz Roja do?

Although much has changed since the early years, the basic principles are still firmly embedded in the organisation. Humaneness, neutrality, impartiality, independence, voluntarism, unity and generality are central and form the basis of everything the Red Cross does. Whether that is helping with an earthquake, a hurricane or the forest fires that ravaged the country recently. Or to fight poverty, accommodate evacuees, promote equality in the workplace or fight discrimination.

A catchy example of the work is the homegrown assistance in 2012. As a result of the economic crisis, almost 22% of Spaniards lived below the poverty line of less than 630 euros a month. Unemployment also hit hard, leaving some families with no money coming in at all, as they don't know benefits in Spain. Ultimately, the Cruz Roja supported these crisis victims with things like food, clothes, nappies and school supplies. But money was also made available to provide shelter for homeless people and young people with no income.

### 70,000 volunteers, 20 million actions

One of the best-known examples, however, is surely the corona crisis aid. At the beginning of COVID-19, the Red Cross launched an action called 'Plan Cruz Roja RESPONDE' to help affected people worldwide. With the participation of more than 70,000 volunteers and the help of numerous organisations, as many as 20 million actions were undertaken. Actions in vaccination, testing, medical aid, transportation of patients and relief goods, as well as prevention and education.

### How can you support the Red Cross?

Whether it is the Cruz Roja in Spain or the Red Cross in the Netherlands: you decide what you donate, donate or sponsor, and even which action your donation goes to. Of course, new volunteers are also more than welcome. So check your country's Red Cross site, because there is still more than enough work to be done worldwide.



# DOGATEERS UNITED FOUNDATION

The expression “leading a dog’s life” must have originated in Spain. In Spain, a whopping 700 dogs are abandoned daily or end up in one of the more than 5,000 killing stations. Illegal puppy mills and the import of dogs from unscrupulous breeders do not improve the situation. Hunting is also one of the culprits; about 10% of the often-neglected and mistreated dogs come from this sector. Dogateers United Foundation advocates for these animals and gives them a second chance.

After purchasing several dogs, co-initiator and chairman Jifke van Popering adopted her first dog from abroad in 1999: “Faki was so scared when she came to us. And the provision of information, guidance, and coaching were so minimal that I thought: this can and should be done differently!” After participating in a few other initiatives, she co-founded Dogateers United with two others in 2020. The foundation guides “second-chance dogs” from Spain to a loving new home in the Netherlands.

## You either do it right or you don’t do it at all

“When we adopt, we don’t take any chances”, says treasurer and secretary Henriëtte Steeghs, taking over from her colleague. “We maintain close contact with our rescuers in Spain, and our mediators always plan a home visit before adoption after an introductory phone call. Only when they are convinced that there is a match and the adopter shares this opinion, we bring the dog to the Netherlands. We also have a qualified dog coach who can offer assistance on location, rely on several foster families, and a boarding kennel whose owner is a dog behaviourist. And if something insurmountable happens and the adopter can no longer care for the dog, we always take the animal back.”

## Searching for a forever home

Although the foundation has now placed over 300 dogs, one dog in particular sticks with Henriëtte: Amy, a mix between a Podenco and a Belgian Shepherd. “She was found as a young girl with her big brother, who always protected her. However, a few weeks before her departure to the Netherlands, her guardian angel died, and Amy had to make the journey alone in 2021. From the start of her adoption, she struggled with the

changes. We eventually brought her back, and after some time in a boarding kennel, a year and a half in foster care, and an intensive training programme, she now lives with Jifke, along with a pack of five other female dogs. That goes very well, but it is, of course, not the ideal solution. It’s sad to see because she is so sweet and tries so hard, but she still hasn’t found her forever home.”

## How can you support Dogateers United?

All help is highly appreciated! For instance, the foundation is constantly looking for shelter families and volunteers. In addition, since the volunteers also bear all costs themselves (except for parking fees), donations are more than welcome. After all, everything goes to the dogs and rescuers, and the adoption fees hardly cover the costs. The advantage is that it is an ANBI foundation, so donors enjoy tax benefits. And last but not least, those coveted baskets are more than welcome. To give the dogs a golden future despite all the misfortune of the past.

## SMALL INITIATIVE, BIG MISSION

*“You cannot change a dog’s past,  
but you can rewrite its future.”*

~ Henriëtte Steeghs & Jifke van Popering





# EYES ON THE WORLD AROUND US

"Be the change you want to see in the world."  
~ Gandhi

# CHARITIES

On the previous pages, you were introduced to our six pillars. In addition, the Global Products Group also modestly supports additional social initiatives:



## Business friend KWF Cancer Society

As part of the Global Products Group, Funeral Products is a Business Friend of KWF Cancer Relief. With our contribution, we support scientific research and help scientists take a step toward even more knowledge, new successes and better treatments. Moreover, by doing so, we are making a strong case for a better quality of life for people with and after this terrible disease.

<https://www.kwf.nl/english>



## Article 25 foundation

Article 25 foundation was born out of love and need for people living with dementia. The foundation's mission is to create global awareness for people with dementia, to see and treat them as equal human beings and to provide them with a good standard of living.

<https://article25foundation.com>



## Salvation Army

The Salvation Army gives lonely people a place where they are welcomed with open arms. Vulnerable people who may live just down the street from you. Hans, for example (59). He lost his job in IT due to depression, and eventually he was left without a home as well. After a long road, he finally gets his life back on track. He now works as a volunteer at the community centre in Rotterdam and feels happier than ever.

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk>



## DagBest

DagBest is a small-scale daytime activities centre in Best. They offer vulnerable elderly people an enjoyable day in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. But elderly people who need more social contact and structure are also welcome. From playing games, walking and cooking together to a trip to the seashore or the museum. Of course, the extensive lunch and freshly prepared hot meal should not be missed. And the foundation also takes care of small care tasks.

<https://www.dagbest.nl>



## Billy's Farm

Cuddling rabbits, learning more about iguanas or visiting animals. At Billy's Boerderij, it's all possible. The 24-year-old Billy has turned his passion into a profession and brings joy to others in the process. He visits daycare centres, schools, and care institutions with his animals and provides a safe haven for animals that people can no longer care for themselves. It's an accessible and heartwarming initiative, with no fewer than 125 animals taking center stage.

<https://www.billysboerderij.nl>



A FINAL WORD  
OR JUST A  
BEGINNING?

# WHAT'S NEXT?

The vision of one person has evolved into three companies with a combined history of over 15 years. Through hard work, we offer more than 2,000 products, supported by 28 suppliers, reaching customers across Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and many other locations worldwide. In addition to our six core pillars, we support numerous smaller social initiatives that deserve our attention because they are important to us. But we want to do more; our goal is to go further, work smarter and perform better.

*"31 CSR Performance Ladder themes, 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 associated targets and 7,854 actions are the next step."*

And you? What are you doing? How do you shape sustainability? Good example follows, so hopefully we have been able to inspire you in your role and responsibilities. This GPG report may be a start. Make something beautiful out of it. For yourself, for the billions of people in our world and for the one planet.





## Global Products Group

Industrieweg 10-12

5627 BS Eindhoven

The Netherlands

T +31 (0) 40 248 50 60

F +31 (0) 40 248 28 80

[www.globalproductsgroup.eu](http://www.globalproductsgroup.eu)

[info@globalproductsgroup.eu](mailto:info@globalproductsgroup.eu)



**Global Products Group**

globally responsible

